

2012 Parks Budget Community Conversations

Table 10 - Summary of Responses
Tuesday, May 3, 2011, Meadowbrook Community Center

Question #5: The City's parks system is expensive to maintain and is subsidized, on average, by about 67 cents on the dollar. What tradeoffs would you be willing to make between a) maintaining parks system services; and b) increasing commercial activity in parks? This might include increased food and drink vending, sponsorships or fee-based programming.

Overall, people seemed suspect of allowing more commercialization in parks. However, if it did happen, then the sentiment was that Parks must retain control over the use of the park. The idea of raising fees and /or raising taxes was generally well-received. The most important thing to folks is that parks remain accessible to all people in Seattle regardless of socio-economic status.

- What does commercialization mean?
- Not willing to trade at expense of loss of parks related activities
- Keep Parks' vision at the forefront of decision making
- Balanced approach to fees
- Don't displace parks-related activities
- We need more taxes to pay for parks
- Can we donate money to parks when we pay for our car tabs?
- We need to put a maintenance and operations levy on the ballot.
- Sponsorships – which companies would be appropriate for what facilities?
- Why don't we charge to park in our parks?
- Could we create a parks pass like the National Parks system has?
- Maybe we could charge resident v non-resident fees for facility and field rentals.
- Corporate sponsorships would be fine as long as the companies did not take over the park
- Have people who use the facilities pay for them
- Parks needs to remember its mission
- Need to make sure a lot of safeguards are written into lease and/or sponsorship agreements so that Parks gets the most out of the deal and not the other way around.
- Raise fees for programs – but keep programs accessible to all
- Charge to use things like dog parks
- Create a municipal parks district like Tacoma has
- Develop revenue streams through programming rather than through property
- Arc is a good example of private/public partnership
- Make it easier to donate money directly to parks
- Sponsorships and fees can go away; 45-year leases are too long
- Some programs should be free; others should at least pay for themselves
- Private interests in parks is a slippery slope – where do we draw the line?

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- Sponsorships ok as long as Parks maintains control over the park
- Raise the fees and create a tier-structured fee program so that everyone pays what they can
- Partner with small businesses and people – need to have a sustainable revenue stream
- Partner responsibly
- Work more closely with Seattle Parks Foundation to create fundraising opportunities for Parks